

The Priesthood Quorums, including the high priests, seventies and elders, and bishops and their counselors, from all parts of the Church, were in attendance; officers of the auxiliary organizations both of men and of women were present, and also members of the Board of Education.

Mission Presidents were in attendance, as follows: John H. Taylor, Northern States; Samuel O. Bennion, Central States; John M. Knight, Western States; Joseph W. McMurrin, California; Brigham S. Young, Northwestern States; Joseph Quinney, Jr., Canada; John G. Allred, Northcentral States; Charles A. Callis, Southern States; Benjamin Goddard, Bureau of Information, Temple Block, Salt Lake City, Utah, and Kenneth Haymore, acting president of the Mexican mission in the absence of Elder Rey L. Pratt who was in South America.

President Grant announced that Elder J. Golden Kimball would preside at the Assembly Hall overflow meeting; and that the music would be furnished by the Murray First ward and by Millcreek ward, of the Cottonwood stake. Appointments were also made for speakers.

The choir and congregation sang the hymn on page 198, "Now let us rejoice in the day of salvation."

Prayer was offered by Elder C. Clarence Neslen, bishop of the Twentieth ward, Salt Lake City.

The choir sang: "The morning breaks, the shadows flee."

PRESIDENT HEBER J. GRANT

This is a very wonderful gathering of Latter-day Saints, the Tabernacle being crowded to overflowing. It is certainly an inspiring sight, and bears witness to the interest and devotion of the Latter-day Saints. I humbly pray that while I stand before you this morning I may be able to say something that shall in some small degree fulfil my share of this conference, and which you can take away with you and feel that you have received some benefit by leaving your homes, some of you from Canada on the north to Mexico on the south, and from New York to San Francisco.

CAUSE FOR REJOICING

I rejoice in the growth of the work of God. I rejoice in the integrity and devotion and the willing self-sacrifice of the people. I am very thankful for all of the many blessings that have come to us as a people, from the time when that great pioneer, Brigham Young, and that wonderful band of men and women, one hundred and forty odd, first came to this valley. I am thankful for the blessings of the Lord that have attended the Saints, notwithstanding the drivings and the persecutions and the mobbings that they have had to endure during the 96 years since the organization of the Church.

It is generally expected that at the April conference of the Church something shall be given in the nature of statistics regarding the condition of the Church. Therefore, before making any special remarks, I shall give you a few items of interest.

CHANGES IN OFFICERS, AND CHURCH STATISTICS

Stake Presidents Honorably Released.

Mark Austin, Fremont stake; Peter M. Hansen (deceased), Bear River stake; Nelson J. Hogan, Idaho stake; Heber C. Austin, Idaho Falls stake.

New Stake Presidents

George S. Romney, Fremont stake; Milton H. Welling, Bear River stake; J. Fred Corbett, Idaho stake; Frederick A. Caine, Idaho Falls stake.

Mission Presidents Honorably Released

Albert R. Peterson, Norwegian mission; John S. Hansen, Danish mission; Charles S. Hyde, Netherlands mission; Herbert B. Foulger, Tahitian mission (acting).

Mission Presidents Appointed

Martin Christopherson, Norwegian mission; Joseph L. Peterson, Danish mission; John P. Lillywhite, Netherlands mission; Alma G. Burton, Tahitian mission.

STATISTICS

There are at present: stakes of Zion, 94; wards, 909; independent branches, 76; missions, 26; branches in missions, 716, making a total of 1701 wards and branches now in the Church.

There were less than twenty stakes of Zion at the time I was chosen to be one of the twelve apostles of the Church, 43 years ago.

Since our conference in 1925, 69 stake and ward meeting houses have been erected and 24 buildings in our missions, which makes a total of 93 structures during the year.

We have not yet completed the Arizona temple, but the expenditures up to the 31st of December, 1925, on that building were \$540,000.

We rejoice in the wonderful growth of work in our temples. In the Salt Lake temple, I learn from brother Geo. F. Richards, we have had as high as 1800 people go through in a single day. Many companies go through there each day, laboring for the salvation of their dead.

In our Church educational system we have enrolled: in Church schools, 4,184; in Seminaries, 10,341; in Religion Classes, 57,000;

Total number receiving week-day religious education, 71,525.

This says nothing of religious education that is being given to 59,000 women in our Relief Societies, 100,000 in our Young Men's and Young Ladies' Mutual Improvement Associations, and a quarter of a million in our Sunday schools. And I am informed that the enrollment of our children in Primary Associations now reaches 100,000.

There were ordinances performed in the temples for the living and the dead last year, 986,321.

Number of people recommended to the temples, 55,695.

We have somewhat more than 2,500 missionaries in the field at the present time.

FINANCIAL STATEMENT

Following are the expenditures from the tithes of the Church for the year 1925:

Stake and Ward Purposes

There has been returned from the tithes to the stakes and wards for building construction, maintenance and operation, \$1,486,351.81.

Education

Expended for the construction, maintenance and operation of Church schools, \$958,440.67.

Temples

Expended for the construction, maintenance and operation of temples, \$319,415.

Charities

For the care of the worthy poor and other charitable purposes, including hospital treatment, \$172,352.74.

Missions

For the maintenance and operation of all the missions and for the erection of places of worship and other buildings in the missions, \$769,926.79.

Making a total, which has been taken from the tithes and returned by the trustee-in-trust for the maintenance and operation of the stakes and wards, for the maintenance and operation of Church schools and temples, for charities and for mission activities, of \$3,706,397.01.

Other Charities

In addition to charities paid from the tithes, as before named, there has also been disbursed the fast offerings, other charities and assistance rendered by the Relief Society, in the sum of \$442,868.07, which amount, added to the \$172,262.74 paid from the tithes, makes the total charity assistance rendered by the Church, \$615,130.81.

There has been collected by the various wards of the Church and paid to missionaries to assist in their maintenance, \$131,941.31.

STATISTICS REGARDING THE GROWTH OF THE CHURCH

Children blessed and entered on the records of the Church in the stakes and missions, 20,233.

Children baptized in the stakes and missions, 14,390.

Converts baptized and entered on the records of the stakes and missions, 6,373.

SOCIAL STATISTICS.

Birth rate, 32 per thousand; marriage rate, 15 per thousand; death rate, 6.7 per thousand.

Divorces—There was one divorce in every 20 marriages. Average in the United States is one divorce in every seven marriages.

Families owning their own homes, 73 per cent.

OBEDIENCE TO LAW

There is at the present time an agitation going on in the United States against the enforcement of prohibition. Straw votes are being taken which show that the overwhelming sentiment of those who have seen fit to vote on this straw ballot are in favor of the repeal or modification of the present law.

There is also a wave of crime sweeping over the country. Perhaps there is nothing of greater importance, next to our spiritual growth, than a determination on the part of the Latter-day Saints to observe the laws of our country. I wish to quote from the immortal Lincoln:

LINCOLN ON THE SUBJECT

"Let every American, every lover of Liberty, every well wisher to his posterity, swear by the blood of the revolution never to violate in the least particular the laws of the country, and never to tolerate their violation by others. As the patriots of '76 did to the support of the Declaration of Independence, so to the support of the Constitution and laws let every American pledge his life, his property and his sacred honor. Let every man remember that to violate the law is to trample on the blood of his father, and to tear the charter of his own and his children's liberty. Let reverence for the laws be breathed by every American mother to the lisping babe that prattles in her lap; let it be taught in schools, in seminaries, and in colleges; let it be written in primers, in spelling books and almanacs; let it be preached from the pulpit, proclaimed in legislative halls, enforced in courts of justice. In short, let it become the political religion of the nation."

One of the Articles of our Faith declares that we believe in sustaining the law and supporting the rulers. So that not only should Latter-day Saints follow the advice of the immortal Lincoln, but they should follow the doctrines of the Church to which they belong.

THEODORE ROOSEVELT

Theodore Roosevelt has the following statements to make that would apply more or less to sustaining the law:

"In character we must have virtue, morality, decency and square dealing as the foundation.

"Any man who claims there can be liberty in spite of and against the law is claiming that anarchy is liberty.

"We need strong bodies; more than that, we need strong minds, and finally we need what counts for more than body or mind—character."

"The man who counts is the man who is decent and who makes himself felt as a force for decency."

THE WORD OF WISDOM A REVELATION TO THE SAINTS

The Latter-day Saints have a revelation from God regarding strong bodies. In that revelation it is recorded that tobacco is not good for the body. It is also recorded there that strong drinks are not to be taken internally, but are only for the washing of the body. We are told in this same revelation that hot drinks are not good for man. This revelation was given to the Latter-day Saints in 1833, only three years after the organization of the Church. Yet, there are many of the people who have never lived up to that revelation. But I am thankful that the great majority of the Latter-day Saints are observers of the Word of Wisdom—that tea, coffee, liquor and tobacco are let alone by the Latter-day Saints.

I have read to you that we have seventeen hundred wards and branches in the Church. In each of the wards of the Church there is a bishop and two counselors and a ward clerk, and in each of the independent branches there is a president and two counselors. There are sometimes three presiding officers in the branches throughout the missions, and sometimes only one. But we have an army of men presiding amounting to four or five thousand, and every one of those men must